

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BE

SUBJECT: CHRYSLER PROPOSAL FOR BELGIAN MANUFACTURE OF M60 TANKS

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 491

(B) STATE 18534

1. JEAN BOLAND, BELGIAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, HAS AGAIN APPROACHED THE EMBASSY WITH REGARD TO THE MANUFACTURE OF M60 TANKS IN BELGIUM. MR. BOLAND STATES THAT THE BELGIAN FIRM COCKERILL HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY A MR. J.L. HESTER, PRESIDENT OF THE COMPANY INTERNATIONAL TRADE OVERSEAS OF WASHINGTON, D.C. MR. HESTER ASKED FOR BIDS ON STEEL TANK PLATES FOR THE M60 AND ON 228 GUN CARRIAGES FOR 155 MM GUNS. HESTER ASKED THAT COCKERILL ADDED 10 PERCENT TO ITS BID TO COVER HESTER'S COMMISSION. THE BIDS ARE DUE FEBRUARY 20.

2. BOLAND SAYS COCKERILL IS INTERESTED, BUT IN VIEW OF CHRYSLER'S EARLIER APPROACH TO BELGIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON ON THE PRODUCTION OF M60 TANKS HE WONDERS WHY CHRYSLER IS NOT DEALING DIRECTLY WITH COCKERILL, AND WHETHER HESTER'S REQUEST FOR 10 PERCENT COMMISSION TO BE ADDED ON TO BID IS NORMAL BUSINESS PRACTICE.

3. EMBASSY REQUESTS ANY INFORMATION YOU HAVE ON MR. HESTER AND WHETHER HE IS AUTHORIZED TO NEGOTIATE
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ON THE MANUFACTURE OF MUNITIONS, ESPECIALLY

M60 TANKS.

4. IN VIEW OF THE IMPENDING BELGIAN DECISION ON THE
AIRCRAFT TO REPLACE THE AGING F-104S, IT
IS IMPORTANT THAT THE U.S. HANDLE THE QUESTION OF
POSSIBLE BELGIUM PARTICIPATION IN THE PRODUCTION OF
PARTS FOR THE M60 TANKS WITH SPECIAL CARE.

5. IN ADDITION TO ANSWERING THE SPECIFIC QUESTION
ABOVE, WE WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED ABOUT WHAT
IS GOING ON AND WHAT THE GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES
ARE. RENNER

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